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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

NIO/W

National Intelligence Officers

NFAC 2773-79

24 May 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment  
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM: National Intelligence Officer for Nuclear Proliferation

SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Report--Nuclear Proliferation ☐

1. Action Requested: None; for your information and possible comments only. ☐

2. Background: I chaired a meeting of the Interagency Intelligence Working Group on Nuclear Proliferation on 18 May to discuss items for warning. The attached report is based on reporting that developed after the meeting. ☐

John Despres

Attachment a/s

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Monthly Warning Report: Nuclear Proliferation (U)

South Africa seems finally to be deciding how to disclose the fact that it has produced weapons-usable uranium to refuel its research reactor. There are now specific indications that South Africa will soon announce, perhaps at the end of May, that it has successfully produced highly enriched uranium. This will reinforce international perceptions that Pretoria is achieving the capability to produce nuclear weapons. The Soviets are likely to respond by issuing warnings about the greater risks of nuclear war and to criticize the US and others for not having prevented the South Africans from advancing so far. Prime Minister Botha seems to have been noncommittal on whether or not nuclear weapons should be built or tested; he also seems to have received divided counsel on the issue. Still, there are no signs of imminent test preparations.

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